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## ABSTRACT

A detailed chronology of events from July 1989 to December 1990 that led to the unification of East and West Germany is presented. Teachers of social studies courses, including global studies and world history, as well as students researching this topic, may find this summary useful. (DB)

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## ON THE PATH TO GERMAN UNITY

- Chronology of Events -

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1989

- Starting in July** Refugees from the GDR are in the German missions in Berlin (East), Budapest and Prague.
- Since September** 50,000 inhabitants of the GDR flee to the Federal Republic of Germany via Hungary.
- September 10** Chancellor Helmut Kohl thanks the Hungarian government for its decision to allow the Germans from the GDR to leave Hungary.
- September 25 - 29** Talks are held between the Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs and the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union, the GDR, Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Topic: Departure of the GDR refugees.
- September 30** Around 6,000 refugees from the GDR at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Prague are allowed to leave for the Federal Republic.
- Beginning of October** Some 1,500 refugees from the GDR at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Warsaw leave for the West.
- October 7** Official celebration of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the GDR. Thousands of people demonstrate against the dictatorship of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). The demonstrations are broken up by the police.
- October 9** "Monday Demonstration" in Leipzig: 100,000 people chant, "We are the people!" Further large-scale demonstrations follow in other cities.
- October 18** After holding the reins of power for 18 years, SED General Secretary Erich Honecker is removed from office. He is succeeded by Egon Krenz.
- November 4** In Berlin (East), the largest protest demonstration in the history of the GDR draws roughly one million people.
- November 7** The government of the GDR resigns.
- November 9** The Berlin Wall is opened and additional crossing points to the Federal Republic of Germany are created.
- November 10** Chancellor Kohl interrupts his trip to Poland and ,together with other politicians, speaks to the people of Berlin in front of the "Schöneberger Rathaus" and at the "Gedächtniskirche".

- November 13** Hans Modrow (SED) is elected the new president of the GDR Council of Ministers.
- November 22** Chancellor Kohl delivers a statement before the European Parliament in Strasbourg concerning current events in the GDR.
- November 28** Chancellor Kohl delivers a policy statement in the German Bundestag on overcoming the division of Germany and Europe (ten-point programme).
- December 1** The People's Chamber strikes the SED's power monopoly from the constitution of the GDR.
- December 4** NATO summit in Brussels: President Bush reports on his meeting with President Gorbachev, at which the German question was the central topic.
- December 3 and 6** SED General Secretary Egon Krenz resigns from all his party and government offices.
- December 7** The "Round Table" talks between the governing parties and the opposition begin in the GDR. Free elections are announced.
- December 8 - 9** European Council in Strasbourg: The heads of state and government declare that the unification of Germany must be achieved in harmony with the Helsinki Final Act and must be embedded in European integration.
- December 16 - 18** In Budapest, Chancellor Kohl praises the Hungarian reform policies, which were the prerequisite for the peaceful revolution in the GDR.
- December 19 - 20** Chancellor Kohl holds talks in Dresden with Prime Minister Modrow on the prospects for developing relations between the two German states and speaks to the people of Dresden in front of the "Frauenkirche".
- December 22** The Brandenburg Gate in Berlin is opened in the presence of Chancellor Kohl, Prime Minister Modrow and other politicians of both German states.
- December 24** The visa and minimum daily exchange requirements are abolished for visitors entering the GDR from the Federal Republic of Germany and Berlin (West).

## 1990

- January 4** At an informal meeting in Latché, Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand discuss the developments in Germany and Europe.
- February 10** Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher meet in Moscow with General Secretary Gorbachev, who assures the Germans that they may live together in one state.
- February 13 - 14** Prime Minister Modrow visits Bonn. Chancellor Kohl suggests negotiations on an economic and monetary union.
- February 14** The foreign ministers of the four World War II victorious powers and of the two German states agree to begin formal talks on German unity ("2 plus 4" talks).
- February 15** In Paris, Chancellor Kohl briefs President Mitterrand on his talks with President Gorbachev and on the current developments in Germany.
- February 24 - 25** Chancellor Kohl meets with President Bush at Camp David: The security alliance between Europe and North America and friendship with the United States are of fundamental importance to the unified Germany as well.
- March 18** The first free elections are held in the GDR. The "Alliance for Germany" (consisting of the Christian Democratic Union [CDU], Democratic Awakening and the German Social Union) wins the elections.
- March 19** At the CSCE Economic Conference in Bonn, Chancellor Kohl emphasizes that the unification of Germany must be achieved in agreement with its neighbours in West and East.
- April 5** Constituent meeting of the first freely-elected People's Chamber of the GDR. The physician Sabine Bergmann-Pohl is elected speaker of parliament and also assumes responsibility as acting head of state for the GDR.
- April 12** For the first time in its history, the People's Chamber of the GDR elects a democratic government. A grand coalition is formed consisting of the "Alliance for Germany", the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party [SPD]. Lothar de Maizière is elected prime minister of the GDR.
- April 19** The policy statement by de Maizière declares a commitment to German unity.
- April 25 - 26** Franco-German consultations: Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand exchange views on the progress of the German unification process.

- April 28** The European Community heads of state and government welcome German unification at a special meeting in Dublin and prepare the way for integrating the GDR into the Community on achievement of German unity.
- May 5** The foreign ministers of the two German states, Great Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union meet in Bonn for an initial round of talks on the external aspects of German unity ("2 plus 4" meeting).
- May 6** Local elections are held in the GDR. The CDU continues to be the strongest party.
- May 16 - 17** In Washington, Chancellor Kohl informs President Bush of further steps toward German unity and thanks him for his support at the "2 plus 4" talks, particularly in regard to achievement of full sovereignty.
- May 18** The Treaty Between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic Establishing a Monetary, Economic and Social Union is signed in Bonn by the government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the government of the GDR.
- June 8** Chancellor Kohl and President Bush emphasize in Washington that full membership of the united Germany in NATO is indispensable.
- June 10** The three Western powers give up their reservations on the representation of Berlin in the Bundestag and the Bundesrat. As of June 21, Berlin representatives have full voting rights.
- June 17** In a joint session in Berlin (East), the German Bundestag and the People's Chamber of the GDR commemorate the June 17, 1953, uprising in the GDR.
- June 21** The Bundestag and the People's Chamber approve identically worded resolutions on the border between the united Germany and Poland. They announce their willingness to reaffirm the definitive nature of the border on the basis of an international treaty.
- The Bundestag approves the Treaty Between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic Establishing a Monetary, Economic and Social Union.
- June 22** The Bundesrat approves the treaty.
- In Assmannshausen, Chancellor Kohl briefs President Mitterrand on the status of the German unification process.

- June 25 - 26** European Council in Dublin: The heads of state and government welcome the conclusion of the treaty between the two German states, with which integration of the GDR into the European Community will be accelerated.
- June 27** The government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the government of the GDR approve a reciprocal agreement on the elimination of border checks along the intra-German border as of July 1, 1990.
- July 1** The monetary, economic and social union between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR enters into force.
- Previous emergency recognition procedures for resettlers from the GDR are eliminated.
- July 5 - 6** The heads of state and government at the NATO summit in London declare that the unified Germany will be an indispensable stability factor in the Atlantic Alliance.
- July 9 - 11** The heads of state and government taking part in the economic summit in Houston welcome the unification of Germany as a visible expression of the right to self-determination and as a contribution towards stability in Europe.
- July 14 - 16** Chancellor Kohl visits the Soviet Union and reaches an agreement with President Gorbachev that the united Germany shall have full sovereignty, be able to decide freely on its alliance membership in the future, and will reduce the strength of its armed forces to 370,000 men. The Soviet Union agrees to withdraw its forces from the GDR in three to four years.
- July 17** The six foreign ministers in the context of the „2 plus 4“ talks and the foreign minister of Poland agree in Paris on principles for establishing the definitive borders of the unified Germany. The ministers agree that instead of a peace treaty a document on Germany regulating all questions concerning the establishment of full sovereignty will be signed by the participants and submitted for approval at the CSCE conference in November of this year.
- July 22** The People's Chamber passes a law establishing states in the GDR. Under this law five states will be formed.

- August 2** An election treaty is signed between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR establishing the modalities for the all-German election to take place on December 2, 1990. Under this agreement, the election will be held with a uniform five percent threshold requirement throughout the country and with the possibility of establishing list links.
- August 23** The People's Chamber in the GDR resolves to accede to the Federal Republic of Germany on October 3, 1990.
- August 31** The Unification Treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR is signed at the Crown Prince Palace in Berlin by Interior Minister Schäuble and State Secretary Krause.
- September 12** Talks between the foreign ministers in Moscow are concluded. The Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany ("2 plus 4" treaty) is signed.
- September 19** The People's Chamber of the GDR ratifies the Unification Treaty.
- September 20** The German Bundestag ratifies the Unification Treaty.
- September 21** The Bundesrat holds its final deliberation on the Unification Treaty.
- October 1 - 2** The document suspending Four-Power rights is signed in New York.
- The CSCE foreign ministers meet in New York.
- October 3** The GDR accedes to the territory of application of the Basic Law in accordance with Article 23 of the Basic Law. Five new states are formed in the territory of the former GDR (Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia).
- October 4** The first session of the Bundestag with the 144 deputies delegated by the People's Chamber of the former GDR is held in the Berlin Reichstag. The new federal ministers are sworn in; the Chancellor delivers the policy statement.
- October 12** The Bundesrat meets; for the first time, plenipotentiaries of the five new federal states participate (in an advisory capacity only).
- October 14** Elections to the state parliaments are held in the five states located in the territory of the former GDR.

- November 3** The European Community heads of state and government hold a special summit in Rome.
- November 19 - 21** The CSCE special summit conference of the heads of state and government concerning the future architecture of Europe is held in Paris.
- December 2** The first all-German election to the German Bundestag is held.